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RR RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHVC
DE RUEHBJ #3152/01 3262315
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 222315Z NOV 09
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6905
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE
RHMFIUU/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 003152

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/CM, EAP/PA, EAP/PD, C
HQ PACOM FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR (J007)
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PRESIDENT OBAMA'S VISIT TO ASIA, CHINA-U.S.
TRADE, AFGHANISTAN

Editorial Quotes

11. PRESIDENT OBAMA'S VISIT TO ASIA

a. "Obama's strategic concerns in focusing on Asia"

The Beijing-based newspaper sponsored by official intellectual publication Guangming Daily and Guangdong Provincial official publication Nanfang Daily The Beijing News (Xin Jing Bao)(11/20)(pg A02): "Obama's claim that the United States is a 'Pacific country' seems designed not only to please Asian countries, but also to bluntly express the United States' strategic priorities, which have shifted from an inordinate focus on Europe to a focus on Asia. In his tour of Asia, President Obama gave people the impression that he is modest. The China-U.S. Joint Statement was a high-profile product of Obama's low-profile trip. The domestic and international challenges confronted by Obama have caused him to put more emphasis on cooperation with Asia. Obama's strategy is to ensure that East Asia is prosperous while West Asia is peaceful, which will benefit U.S. interests in Asia. Obama's comments about the U.S. not containing China and welcoming a larger role for China in the international system show that during his administration China-U.S. relations have started on a high level and will continue to run on a high level."

b. "U.S.-South Korea Free Trade Agreement is the touchstone of Obama's trade stance"

Guangdong 21st Century Publishing Company Ltd.'s business newspaper 21st Century Business Herald (21Shiji Jingji Baodao)(11/20)(pg 2): "The U.S. Congress did not approve the U.S.-South Korea Free Trade Agreement, which was signed in 2007, until now. South Korea's position on the issue is mild on the surface but tough at the core by holding to the position that the FTA will not be renegotiated. South Korea did not sit and wait for 'hand-outs' from the United States, but instead recently signed a Free Trade Agreement with Europe. The United States' attitude towards the U.S.-South Korea FTA will serve as an indication of the Obama administration's position on free trade. Obama knows he has to face mid-term elections next November, which is less than one year away. If he does not push for the passage of the U.S.-South Korea FTA before the elections, then it will be delayed until 2011. That would be four years after the signing of the agreement, and would clearly demonstrate Obama's anti-free trade position. The U.S.-South Korea FTA is clearly the touchstone of Obama's trade stance."

12. CHINA-U.S. TRADE

"Open high-tech exports to boost China-U.S. trade"

The official intellectual publication Guangming Daily (Guangming Ribao)(11/20)(pg 8): "U.S. restrictions on high-tech exports to China are one important reason for the trade imbalance between the United States and China. Export restrictions are harming both sides

and benefiting no one. This policy is in fact a relic of the Cold War. More insightful American intellectuals agree that unilateral restrictions on high-tech exports will harm the United States' own interests. If the United States eases its restrictions on high-tech exports to China, the balance of trade will improve and trade and economic cooperation between the two countries will expand. This is a far more effective way for the United States to address the trade imbalance than just being obsessed with the dollar-yuan exchange rate. Unilateral barriers in this field will inevitably harm trade flows between the two countries."

13. AFGHANISTAN

"Stability in Afghanistan is important for China"

The official Communist Party international news publication Global Times (Huanqiu Shibao)(11/20)(pg 7): "Afghanistan's stability influences not only China's economic interests, but also its interests in the War on Terror and other regional situations. A stable Afghanistan will help China achieve its broader regional interests and guarantee the survival of the government in Pakistan, China's traditional ally. Chinese experts said that China-U.S. relations are entering a period of stability accompanied by China's rise. Even if the United States continues to exert influence in Afghanistan, it will not pose much of a threat to China. Afghanistan is currently more of a burden than a negotiating chip for the United States. However, an extremist government in Afghanistan would pose a serious threat to neighboring countries, affecting in particular stability in China's Xinjiang Province. At this point, stability in Afghanistan is very important for China."

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